

REMARKS

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 2-13 and 15-21 and 23-37 are pending. By the present amendment, claims 2, 4-6, 10-12, 16, 17, 19-21, 23 and 28-30 have been amended, claim 22 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer as to the subject matter contained therein and new claims 36 and 37 have been added. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

An Information Disclosure Statement is filed concurrently herewith.

The rejection of claims 3-10 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph is respectfully traversed. Without acquiescing in the rejection, the claims have been amended for clarity, and are fully compliant with 35 U.S.C. §112. Therefore, the rejection is overcome, and reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-13 and 15-35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over the combination of Englund et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,197,474) in view of Wang et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,928,148) and further in view of Hajnal et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,380,741).

This application claims priority from Application No. 124819/2000 filed in Japan on April 25, 2000. Applicant submits herewith an English-language translation of the priority application 124819/2000 and respectfully requests that the subject application be accorded the benefit of the filing date of this priority

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application. Because the filing date of the priority application is earlier than the U.S. filing date of Hajnal et al. (i.e., November 15, 2000), Hajnal et al. is not prior art to the claims of the subject application. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the rejection of claims 1-13 and 15-35, which is based on a proposed combination involving Hajnal et al., is improper and should be withdrawn.

The filing of the English-language translation of the priority document does not constitute (and should not be construed to constitute) any admission or acquiescence regarding the propriety of the rejection based on the proposed combination involving Hajnal et al.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the entire application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.


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Should the Examiner deem that further issues require resolution prior to allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney of record at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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